


Modern Listening Materials: Using iTunes and Podcasts in the ESL Classroom

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The Old Listening Library

- ◆ The ESL classroom was stocked with expensive cd's, dvd's, video tapes, and cassettes.
- ◆ Materials became outdated quickly.

The Modern Listening Library

- ◆ Does not rely on disks or cassettes
- ◆ Depends on authentic materials
- ◆ Millions of up-to-date listening materials are easy to find, easy to use, and free.

Podcasts, Itunes, and Ipods

- ◆ Podcasts are free audio or video files
- ◆ They range from news, advice, to cooking lessons.
- ◆ Each podcast can last from a few minutes to more than an hour.
- ◆ Podcasts are single files or a subscription to a series of files.



Podcasts, Itunes, and Ipods

- ◆ Itunes is a free computer program created by Apple to store, access, or buy music and video files.



Podcasts, Itunes, and Ipods

- ◆ Ipods are portable devices to take Itunes information on the go.
- ◆ Ipod is only one brand of media player on the market.
- ◆ Ipods are not free.



Downloading Itunes and Podcasts

- ◆ Podcasts can be downloaded from iTunes or websites.
- ◆ Itunes has the largest collection of podcasts.
- ◆ The free download is available at <http://www.apple.com/itunes>
- ◆ Use Itunes to download and play all podcasts.



Podcasts in the Classroom

- ◆ Podcasts specifically for ESL
- ◆ Podcasts applicable in the ESL classroom

English as a Second Language Podcast (USA)

- ◆ Audio file, 10-15 minutes long
- ◆ Topics focus on life skills such as: medication, road signs, or divorce.
- ◆ A slow dialogue is presented with plenty of colloquialisms followed by a discussion
- ◆ Transcripts, vocabulary, comprehension questions and more are for sale on the website.
- ◆ www.eslpod.com
- ◆ Classroom application



Splendid Speaking (UK)

- ◆ Audio file, 10-15 minutes long
- ◆ Advanced student speakers practice formal speaking techniques. The narrator gives feedback.
- ◆ The focus is on conversation skills and methods.
- ◆ Free Vocabulary and comp. questions are available through www.splendidspeaking.com
- ◆ Classroom application

BBC Grammar Challenge



GRAMMAR CHALLENGE

- ◆ Audio file, 10-15 minutes long
- ◆ A student is challenged to answer listening questions on grammar.
- ◆ A short grammar topic is also presented
- ◆ The website has free supplementary materials.
- ◆ Classroom application

Voice of America Special English

- ◆ Audio and video
- ◆ 5-30 minutes
- ◆ News Stories
- ◆ Classroom Application
- ◆ www.voanews.com/specialenglish

The screenshot shows the VOA News Special English website. At the top, there's a header with the VOA News logo, 'Special English' text, and a search bar. Below the header is a navigation bar with links like 'Special English Home', 'Topics', 'Video/Audio', and 'Transcript Archive'. A date '17 January 2010' is displayed. On the left side, there's a sidebar with various links such as 'What Is Special English', 'How to Use Our Web Site', 'Our Word Book', 'Radio Programs', 'Find Us on TV', 'Contact Us', 'Find a Story', 'By Subject', 'By Program', 'Listen to Shows', 'MP3', 'Windows Media', 'Real Audio', 'All Formats', 'Help', 'Watch', 'Weekly TV Feed', 'Services', 'Stories by E-mail', 'RSS Feeds', 'Podcasts', 'English Learning', and 'Words and'. The main content area features a featured story about Margaret Mead, titled 'Margaret Mead, 1901-1978: A Public Face of Anthropology', with a photo of her and a brief description. Below this is a 'Twitter Updates' section and a 'Verb Phrases by SMS' section. On the right side, there's a 'Podcasts in VOA Special English' section with a list of programs including 'Agriculture Report', 'American Mosaic', 'American Stories', 'Development Report', 'Economics Report', 'Education Report', and 'Explorations'. At the bottom, there's a 'WORLD NEWS' section with a list of headlines.

General Podcasts for ESL Learners



- ◆ Video file, 1-5 minutes long
- ◆ Howcast teaches life skills with simple steps such as doing laundry or losing weight.
- ◆ Classroom Application
- ◆ www.howcast.com

NPR: National Public Radio

- ◆ This I Believe, 10-15 min.
- ◆ Audio file
- ◆ Classroom Application
- ◆ www.thisibelieve.org
- ◆ Story Corps, 3-10 min.
- ◆ Audio file
- ◆ Classroom Application
- ◆ www.storycorps.org



Benefits of Podcasts

- ◆ Free program download and free audio and video files.
- ◆ An Ipod or the Internet is not necessary for playing the files
- ◆ This new medium is popular with more topics added all the time
- ◆ You can make your own!